

§ 531.606

5 CFR Ch. I (1–1–16 Edition)

other regulations that refer to this section, the reference to a *locality pay area* is deemed to be a reference to the applicable geographic area associated with the given pay entitlement. For example, for the purpose of special rates under 5 CFR part 530, subpart C, the reference to a *locality pay area* is deemed to be a reference to the geographic area covered by a special rate schedule.

[73 FR 66154, Nov. 7, 2008]

§ 531.606 Maximum limits on locality rates.

(a) Except as provided by paragraph (b) of this section, a locality rate may not exceed the rate of basic pay payable for level IV of the Executive Schedule.

(b)(1) A locality rate for an employee in a category of positions described in 5 U.S.C. 5304(h)(1)(A) and 5304(h)(1)(B) may not exceed the rate for level III of the Executive Schedule.

(2) A locality rate for an employee in a category of positions described in 5 U.S.C. 5304(h)(1)(C) may not exceed—

(i) The rate for level III of the Executive Schedule, when the positions are not covered by an appraisal system certified under 5 U.S.C. 5307(d); or

(ii) The rate for level II of the Executive Schedule, when the positions are covered by an appraisal system certified under 5 U.S.C. 5307(d).

(3) A locality rate for an employee in a category of positions described in 5 U.S.C. 5304(h)(1)(D) may not exceed—

(i) The rate for level IV of the Executive Schedule, when the maximum scheduled annual rate of pay (excluding any retained rate) for such positions is less than or equal to the maximum payable scheduled annual rate of pay for GS-15; or

(ii) The rate for level III of the Executive Schedule, when the maximum scheduled annual rate of pay (excluding any retained rate) for such positions exceeds the maximum payable scheduled annual rate of pay for GS-15, but is not more than the rate for level IV of the Executive Schedule.

(4) If initial application of paragraph (b)(3) of this section otherwise would reduce an employee's existing locality rate, the employee's locality rate is capped at the higher of—

(i) The amount of the employee's locality rate on the day before paragraph (b)(3) of this section was initially applied; or

(ii) The rate for level IV of the Executive Schedule.

(c) Paragraph (b) of this section does not apply to experts and consultants appointed under 5 U.S.C. 3109 if the pay for those experts and consultants is limited to the highest rate payable under 5 U.S.C. 5332 (*i.e.*, the unadjusted maximum GS-15 rate). Such experts and consultants are subject to the pay limitations established in 5 CFR 304.105.

(d) A portion of a locality payment that is not payable because of an applicable limitation is not considered in applying any other provision of law or regulation.

[70 FR 31304, May 31, 2005, as amended at 76 FR 32863, June 7, 2011]

§ 531.607 Computing hourly, daily, weekly, and biweekly locality rates.

(a) Apply the following methods to convert an annual locality rate to an hourly, daily, weekly, or biweekly rate:

(1) To derive an hourly rate, divide the annual locality rate by 2,087 and round to the nearest cent, counting one-half cent and over as the next higher cent.

Example:

Annual locality rate = \$50,000

Computation of hourly rate: $\$50,000 \div 2,087 = 23.957$ or \$23.96.

(2) To derive a daily rate, multiply the hourly rate by the number of daily hours of service required by the employee's basic daily tour of duty.

Example:

Hourly rate = \$23.96

Daily hours = 8

Computation of daily rate: $\$23.96 \times 8 = \191.68

(3) To derive a weekly or biweekly rate, multiply the hourly rate by 40 or 80, as applicable.

Example:

Hourly rate = \$23.96

Biweekly hours = 80

Computation of biweekly rate: $\$23.96 \times 80 = \$1,916.80$

(b) Notwithstanding paragraph (a) of this section, for a firefighter whose pay

is computed under 5 U.S.C. 5545b, a firefighter hourly locality rate is computed using a divisor of 2,756 hours instead of 2,087, as prescribed in 5 CFR part 550, subpart M. Also, such a firefighter's weekly and biweekly locality rates must be based on the firefighter's extended tour of duty as prescribed in that subpart.

[70 FR 31304, May 31, 2005]

§531.608 Relationship of locality rates to other pay rates.

(a) An employee must receive the greatest of the following rates of pay, as applicable—

(1) The scheduled annual rate of pay payable to the employee;

(2) A locality rate under this subpart;

(3) A special rate under 5 CFR part 530, subpart C, or a similar rate under other legal authority (e.g., 38 U.S.C. 7455); or

(4) A retained rate under 5 CFR part 536 or a similar rate under other legal authority.

(b) A GS employee receiving a special rate is entitled to any applicable locality payment on the same basis as any other GS employee. The locality payment is computed based on the employee's scheduled annual rate of pay, which excludes any special rate. The employee is entitled to the higher of the locality rate or the corresponding special rate. As provided in 5 U.S.C. 5305(h) and 5 CFR 530.303(d), when an employee's locality rate exceeds a corresponding special rate, the employee's entitlement to the special rate is terminated.

[70 FR 31304, May 31, 2005]

§531.609 Adjusting or terminating locality rates.

(a) When an employee's official worksite is changed to a different locality pay area, the employee's entitlement to the locality rate for the new locality pay area begins on the effective date of the change in official worksite.

(b) A locality rate must be adjusted as of the effective date of any change in the applicable scheduled annual rate of pay or any change in the applicable locality percentage.

(c) Except as provided in paragraph (d) of this section, entitlement to a lo-

cality rate associated with a particular locality pay area under this subpart terminates on the date—

(1) An employee's official worksite is no longer in the locality pay area;

(2) An employee is no longer in a position covered by this subpart; or

(3) An employee separates from Federal service.

(d) In the event of a change in the geographic coverage of a locality pay area, the effective date of any change in an employee's entitlement to a locality rate of pay under this subpart is the first day of the first pay period beginning on or after the effective date indicated in the applicable final rule published in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

(e) As provided in §531.205, when an employee becomes covered by one or more different pay schedule(s) because the employee is stationed at a new official worksite in a different geographic location, the employee's pay (including a locality rate) must first be converted to the applicable pay schedule(s) in the new location before applying any other pay action (other than a general pay adjustment).

[70 FR 31304, May 31, 2005, as amended at 72 FR 34363, June 22, 2007; 78 FR 5115, Jan. 24, 2013]

§531.610 Treatment of locality rate as basic pay.

A locality rate is considered to be an employee's rate of basic pay only for the purpose of computing or applying—

(a) Retirement deductions, contributions, and benefits under 5 U.S.C. chapters 83 and 84;

(b) Life insurance premiums and benefits under 5 U.S.C. chapter 87;

(c) Premium pay under 5 U.S.C. chapter 55, subchapter V, and 5 CFR part 550, subparts A and I (including the computation of limitations on premium pay);

(d) Severance pay under 5 U.S.C. 5595 and 5 CFR part 550, subpart G;

(e) Advances in pay under 5 U.S.C. 5524a and 5 CFR part 550, subpart B;

(f) Post differentials under 5 U.S.C. 5925(a) and danger pay allowances under 5 U.S.C. 5928 for an employee temporarily working in a foreign area when the employee's official worksite is located in a locality pay area;